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FACSIMILE COVER SHEET

TO: Examiner Hung Nguyen
Group Art Unit 2851

FROM: Shawn W. Fraser

RE: Application No. 09/817,018-Interview

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MESSAGE

Dear Examiner Nguyen:

Further to our telephone conversation on Tuesday (7/15), I have attached a brief summary of my comments to assist you in preparing for the interview scheduled for July 24, 2003 at 10:00am.

Regards,

Shawn Fraser

Direct: 202-721-5428

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U.S. Patent Application No.: 09/817,018

Filed: March 27, 2001

Attorney Docket No.: 022560.002758

—FOR INTERVIEW PURPOSES ONLY—

The present invention includes an elastic member connected to both of the first and second supporting members.

As acknowledged in the Official Action, the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) of Figure 11 does not disclose an elastic member connected to both the first and second supporting members.

The cited patent, U.S. Patent No. 6,118,599 (Spinali, et al.), also fails to disclose this feature. The Applicants submit that Spinali, et al. discloses that connecting barrel members 116 and 126 are formed of materials with a small thermal expansion coefficient. However, the thermal expansion coefficient simply refers to the amount of expansion in relation to the change of the temperature. Yet, the fact that the thermal expansion coefficient is not zero does not mean that it has "elasticity."

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